

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 13 and 14 have been indicated as containing allowable subject matter.

Claims 13-15 are objected to because of minor informalities.

Claims 1, 2, 7, 11, 12 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Saito (U.S. Patent No. 5,890,791) in view of Katsu et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,692,133).

Claims 3-6 and 8-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Saito and Katsu et al., and further in view of Suzuki (U.S. Patent No. 6,088,074).

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicants have amended claim 1 to further define the invention in response to the Office Action dated December 22, 2006, and amended claims 13-15 to improve their form. Accordingly, claims 1-15 remain pending in this application for further consideration.

Objection to Claims 13-15

Claims 13-15 are objected to because of minor informalities. Applicants have amended each of claims 13-15 in accordance with the Examiner's comments. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to claims 13-15 be withdrawn.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1, 2, 7, 11, 12 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Saito (U.S. Patent No. 5,890,791) in view of Katsu et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,692,133). Claims 3-6 and 8-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Saito and Katsu et al., and further in view of Suzuki (U.S. Patent No. 6,088,074). To the extent that the rejections might be applied against the claims as newly-amended, they are respectfully traversed as being based on a reference or a combination of references that neither teaches nor suggests the novel combination of features recited in the claims.

With regard to independent claim 1, as newly-amended, Applicants respectfully submit that Saito, Katsu et al. and Suzuki, whether taken individually or in combination, do not teach or suggest the claimed combination, including at least the recited feature of “a light incoming surface into which enters a light emitted from a light-emitting face of a light guide having a light-incident face into which a light emitted from a primary light source enters.”

Katsu et al. disclose in Figs. 2 and 3 that a light guide plate 25 has a light emitting surface 26 with convexoconcave portions, and the top of convex portion thereof has an oblique flat face 35. The Examiner alleges that it is obvious to use the prism layer of Katsu et al. with the device of Saito in order to improve the brightness of the device. Applicants respectfully disagree. For example, the above structure of Katsu et al. is NOT of an optical deflector element used in combination with the light guide to achieve the light source device, but of the light guide. Moreover, the above structure of Katsu et al. is NOT of a light incoming face into which enters a light emitted from a light-emitting face of the light guide, but of a light emitting surface from which a light is emitted.

On the other hand, in the present invention as recited in newly-amended independent claim 1, plural elongated prisms are arrayed in parallel with each other on the light incoming surface, into which enters a light emitted from a light-emitting face of a light guide having a light incident face into which a light emitted from a primary light source enters. That is, in the present invention, the elongated prisms are formed on the optical deflector element, especially on the light incoming surface thereof, to which the light emitted from the light guide, especially the light emitting face thereof, enters.

Optional functions of the structure of light incoming surface of the optical deflector element (e.g., the light incoming surface of the optical deflector element of the present invention or of Saito) are essentially and substantially different from those of the light emitting surface of the light guide (e.g., the light emitting surface 26 of the light guide plate 25 of Katsu et al.). The structure of the light incoming surface of the optical deflector elements acts on the light incoming on the surface, whereas the structure of the light emitting surface of the light guide acts on the light to be emitted from the surface. In the device of Katsu et al., the flat face formed on the convexoconcave portions reflects the incident light (from the inside of the light guide plate) largely by the direction of the side face 24, so that it acts to improve the light propagation amount in the X axis direction, as mentioned in column 7, lines 43-50 of Katsu et al. Accordingly, it would be apparent that such a function of the flat face as mentioned in Katsu et al. be no longer needed in the light incoming surface of the optical deflector element.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the skilled person would not try to use the structure of the former in place of the structure of the latter, and vice versa. Indeed, although the device of Katsu et al. uses prism sheets (corresponding to the optical deflector element) 20, 21 positioned on the light emitting surface 26 of the light guide plate 25, there is no mention as

to an application of the structure having the oblique flat face 35 to the light incoming surface of the prism sheets 20, 21. Moreover, Applicants respectfully submit that Saito and Suzuki cannot remedy the above-noted deficiencies of Katsu et al. In other words, Applicants respectfully submit that Saito, Katsu et al. and Suzuki, whether taken individually or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the claimed combination, including at least the recited feature of “a light incoming surface into which enters a light emitted from a light-emitting face of a light guide having a light-incident face into which a light emitted from a primary light source enters,” as recited by newly-amended independent claim 1.

For at least the reasons as those set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that the Office Action has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness with regard to newly-amended independent claim 1, and hence its dependent claims 2-15. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn.

Without other rejections pending, Applicants respectfully assert that claims 1-15 are in condition for allowance.

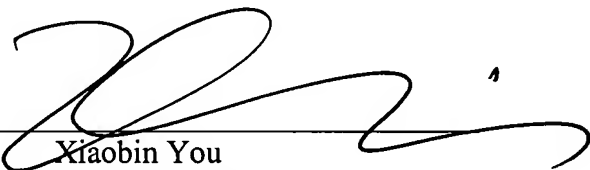
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments, reconsideration and the timely allowance of all pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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